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TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

Readiness, Response, Recovery: PROSAFE Training Tackles Food Safety



Mekong Institute (MI) organized the *Food Safety Emergency Management in the Supply Chain* regional training to strengthen capacities of 30 food safety stakeholders and regulatory officials from Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and Vietnam in developing national food safety control systems. The activity, which ran from September 2 to 13, 2019 at the MI Residential Training Center, was funded by the New Zealand Aid Programme under the PROSAFE (Promoting Safe Food for Everyone) Project. [Read more.](#)

MI-CSG Workshop Promotes Regional Power Connectivity



MI with China Southern Power Grid Company, Ltd. and the Yunnan Power Grid Company, Ltd. conducted the *Power Market Construction and Development* workshop on September 25 and 26, 2019 at the MI Residential Training Center. About 48 technicians and middle management personnel from national energy agencies and power utilities studied the merits of building a regional electricity market and prioritizing optimal allocation of power resources to maximize prospects for efficient power operations in the Lancang-Mekong Region. [Read more.](#)

Myanmar SMEs Learn About New Food Labeling Regulations



MI organized the Food Safety Learning Event on *New Product Labeling Guidelines for Processed Agri-Food* in Yangon, Myanmar on September 26, 2019. Funded by the New Zealand Aid Programme under MI's PROSAFE Project, the activity briefed 30 small and medium agri-food enterprises on the country's food labeling guidelines. Participants also discussed with government agencies economic opportunities and challenges in implementing these in the local market. [Read more.](#)

IPM Trainings Conducted to Combat FAW

The Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor Myanmar Field Office, with the Department of Agriculture (DOA), delivered three consecutive trainings on soil, seed, and integrated pest management to increase awareness among farmers on the effective and sustainable management of Fall Armyworm and share best practices of maize cultivation. The trainings were held in Htee Char Yar, Bo Tae, and Ingyin Myaing villages from September 4 to 6, 2019. Learning sessions were led by experts from DoA alongside Marlarmyaing, a local agro-input company, who shared knowledge on plant protection and pest control.



Second B2G Reinforces Cross-Border Landscape in Mukdahan, Quang Tri, and Savannakhet

MI, under its Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor Project, conducted the second Business-to-Government (B2G) meeting where high-level participants reviewed and strategized action plans to meet targets agreed at previous B2G meetings on import-export regulatory guidelines, procedures and operational management. About 123 representatives from the public and private sectors from Mukdahan, Quang Tri, and Savannakhet attended the September 9, 2019 meeting in Savannakhet, Lao PDR. [Read more.](#)



Cooperative Members Join Sales and Operations Training

The Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor Lao Field Office, with the Laos-Japan Human Resource Development Institute of the National University of Laos, delivered a training on sales and inventory management, cooperative operations, and customer relations on September 14, 2019. Attended by 12 cooperative members and a sales assistant from the Khammouane Agricultural Development Cooperative, the training aimed to enhance understanding on cooperative principles through case studies, presentations, class exercises, and a store visit for on-site demonstration.

SLV to Twin Borders Promote Efficient Management and Operations

A joint structured learning visit to Dansavanh and Savannakhet in Lao PDR and Lao Bao and Quang Tri in Vietnam was organized on September 16 and 17, 2019 as part of the Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor's cross-border trade facilitation efforts. Government officials and business sector representatives from Mukdahan and Nakhon Phanom, Thailand explored practices in neighboring cross-border points and discussed proposed improvements in their respective provincial borders. The participants acquired insights on border management system such as increasing transparency of fee collection through information displays and enhancing border operations with single-window counters and single-service inspections.



Enhancing Farmer Capacity Farm- and Market-Wise

A total of 57 maize growers from eight different villages participated in a post-harvest and marketing management training last September 20, 2019 at Hotel Conqueror in Myawaddy. The training provided farmers a marketing overview of agricultural commodities and products; explained market entry requirements, discussed ways to sustain market demand; and imparted a better understanding of post-harvest losses in order to produce good quality maize as per market demand. Overall, the activity aimed to modernize farmers' traditional practices and processes, as well as facilitate business linkages to help increase income.





VNFO Organizes Training on Border Clearance Procedures

As a follow-up activity after the Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor Business Forum, a training on border clearance procedures for agricultural products was organized to assist Vietnamese enterprises to better facilitate importation of products from Laos through the Dansavan–Savannakhet and Naphao–Khammoune border gates. Held on September 20 in Quang Tri, the training gathered 13 government officials from Savannakhet, Khammoune, Quang Tri, and Quang Binh, as well as representatives from 14 import-export agri-product enterprises in Khammoune, Quang Tri, and Quang Binh. At the end of the activity, the delegates agreed to identify a point of contact to settle issues on import requirements and procedures.



VN Government Taps on RLED-EWEC Project to Assess Poverty Reduction Targets

From September 24 to 26, 2019, consultants from the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs of Vietnam conducted in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with coffee and rubber farmer groups in Quang Tri Province, as well as representatives from Huong Hoa Agribank, Binh Dien Fertilizer Company, and Cam Lo Rubber Factory. The farmers reported increased income and improved living conditions as a result of the Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor's Quadripartite and direct linkage models. After the field visit, the consultants expressed appreciation of the results and achievements of the Project and will consider proposing the models to other provinces in Vietnam, as identified in the National Target Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction for 2021-2025.



Field Monitoring Ensures Transparency of Border Fees and Charges

On September 27, 2019, the working group for cross-border trade facilitation in Savannakhet Province observed and assessed payment procedures between border agencies and service users in the 2nd Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge International Border and Dansavanh International Border. From the monitoring visit, the working group reported improved collection of fees and charges after the Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor initiative of installing signboards which detail the amount, costs, and other regulatory requirements of cross-border trade.

Keopeseuth Rice Mill Implements GMP

With the help of the Regional and Local Economic Development-East West Economic Corridor Project, Keopeseuth Rice Mill in Sonnabouly District, Savannakhet Province has strengthened its food safety standards by implementing 5S and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). Mr. Vilakhone Philomlak, a consultant from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, facilitated the Project's four-day training of rice mill staff. The participants were taught best practices in rice processing and were introduced to modern rice mill facilities to help boost quality and productivity.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

LMC Special Fund Working Group Visits MI

The Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) Special Fund working group led by Mr. Fang Xinwen, Counselor of the Department of Asian Affairs, paid a visit to MI on September 10, 2019. MI Executive Director Dr. Watcharas Leelawath and program staff welcomed the delegation and updated them on the progress of LMC-supported projects in water resource management, trade and logistics, cross-border special economic zones, rural e-commerce development, and capacity building for regional cooperation.





MI Joins 'Breakfast of Champions'

Last September 12, 2019, Dr. Watcharas Leelawath moderated the New Zealand-Thai Chamber of Commerce talk "Breakfast of Champions." Hon. Damien O'Connor, New Zealand's Minister of Agriculture, spoke at the event and shared insights on "Why the Economist's Intelligence Unit ranks New Zealand Number 1 Globally for Food Safety."



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

OCTOBER

8

Food Safety Forum on Managing Food Safety Risks in the Agri-Food Chain (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)

11, 15, 16

RLED-EWEC Project Completion Workshops (Myawaddy, Myanmar; Khammouane, Lao PDR; Quang Tri, Vietnam)

15

PROSAFE Forum on Food Safety and Quality - A Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration (Vientiane, Lao PDR)

14 - 24

Regional Training Program on Communication Skill Capacity Building for Regional Cooperation and Integration in Lancang-Mekong Region

22

Food Safety Forum on Strengthening Public Sector Commitment in Promoting Food Safety in the Food Supply Chain (Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam)

23, 25, 29

Workshops on Development of Online SEZ Information Platform in Lancang-Mekong Region (Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam)

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